



From Assessment to Practice: Research-based Approaches to Teaching Adults to Read

Part 2: Fluency and Vocabulary

ALRWG

**NIFL/NCSALL
Adult Literacy Research Working Group**



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Purpose

- Follow-up to previous webcast
- Provide practical rationale for use of research-based principles
- Use two additional components of reading to illustrate research-based practices and the direct link between research and practical approaches to teaching adults to read
- Show how the four basic components of reading can provide a solid framework for assessment and instruction



Review: What is Reading? The Basic Components of Reading

- **Alphabetics:** The use of letters in an alphabet to represent spoken words
 - **Phonemic Awareness:** Knowledge of speech sounds
 - **Word Analysis (Phonics plus):** Letter-sound knowledge
- **Fluency:** Ability to read with speed and ease
- **Vocabulary:** Knowledge of word meanings
- **Comprehension:** Understanding a text, or “constructing meaning”



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The Components of Reading

Print-Based Components

Alphabets:

Phonemic Awareness

Word Analysis

(decoding,
word recognition;
structural analysis)

Fluency

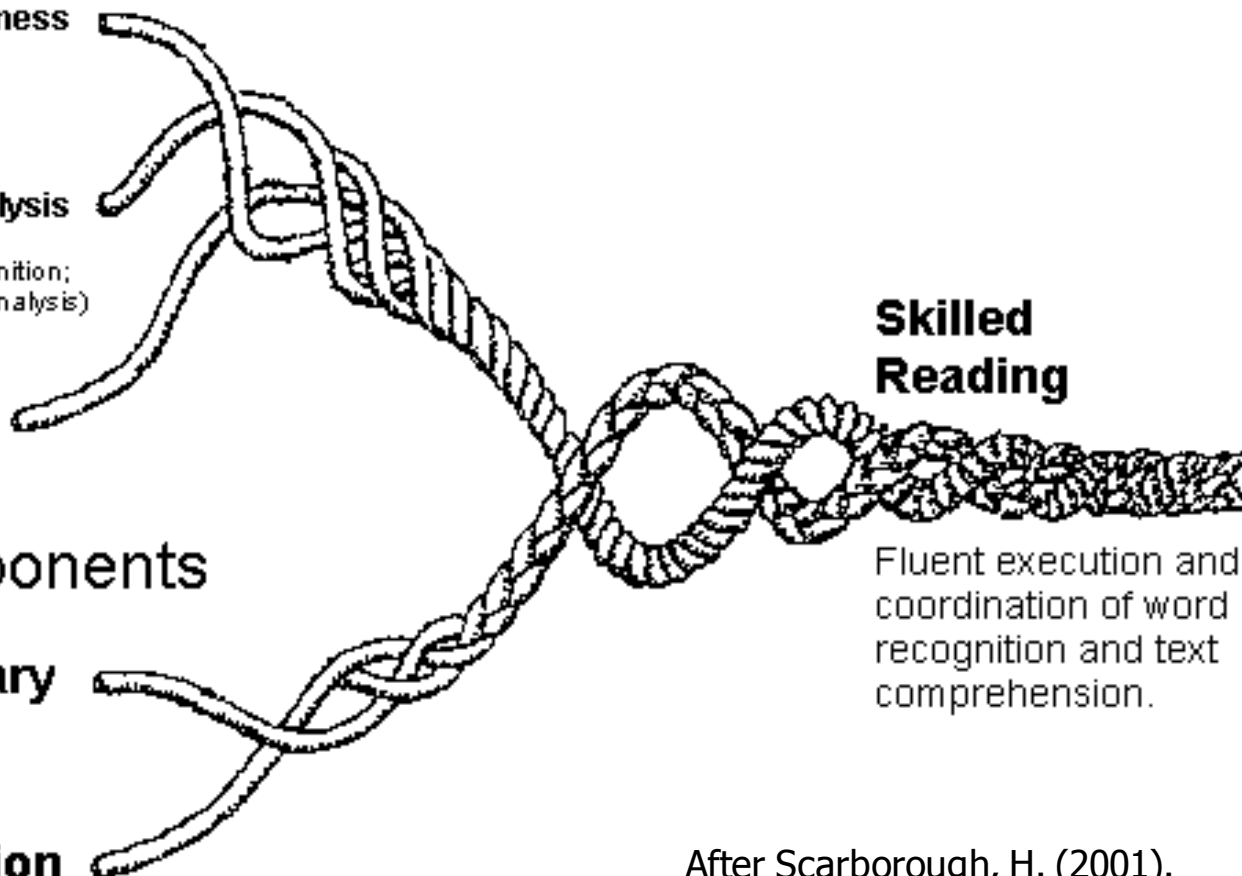
Meaning-Based Components

Vocabulary

Comprehension

Skilled Reading

Fluent execution and
coordination of word
recognition and text
comprehension.



After Scarborough, H. (2001).



Review: Growth in Reading

Beginning Readers

- Comprehension or meaning-based skills are better than print-based skills
- Work on print skills the most (though comprehension important)

Advanced Readers

- Work on comprehension skills the most (though efficient decoding important)



Review: Adult Literacy Research Working Group (ALRWG)

Purpose

- **Identify** existing research related to adult literacy reading instruction
- **Evaluate** research
- Provide research-based **products** – principles and teaching practices
- **Disseminate** products and information



Review: Assessment Principle 1

- Adult education learners' reading abilities vary a lot, so assessing just one component of reading may not give enough information for instruction
- If all components of reading are assessed, the pattern of scores that results can be used to guide reading instruction



Review: Sample Profile

	Ed	Ruth
Reading Comprehension	6	6
Word Analysis —Decoding	2.6	7.5
Fluency	5	10
Oral Vocabulary	8	7



Fluency Assessment Research

- Principle 8: Reading fluency is a problem for beginning adult readers, just as it is for all beginning readers. Fluency can also be a problem for intermediate adult readers, and even for many adults at advanced ABE levels.



Fluency Instruction Research

- Principle 9: Teaching reading fluency to adult beginning readers can lead to increases in reading achievement.
- Principle 10: Fluency can be taught using approaches that include the repeated reading of text.
- Supported by research at the K-12 level.



Fluency Assessment

Three components of fluent reading:
Accuracy, Rate, Prosody

1. Reading Accuracy

- Are words read correctly?
- Does the reader pay attention to the punctuation?



Scoring Oral Reading Accuracy

Real Errors

- Mispronunciations – count only *first time* the error is made
- Substitutions
- Insertions
- Omissions
- Supplied words



Scoring Oral Reading Accuracy (continued)

Not Real Errors

- Self-corrections
- Repetitions
- Errors in word endings: -ing, -ed, -s
- Pronunciation errors in proper nouns



Fluency Assessment (continued)

2. Reading Rate

- Why do we need to measure oral reading rate? It is a measure of word recognition automaticity. It is the first step in an informal assessment of fluency.
- How do we measure reading rate?
$$\text{words per minute} = (\text{number of words in passage} \div \text{reading time (in seconds)}) \times 60$$



Frankenstein

Diagnostic Assessments of Reading, (1992). Riverside: Itasca
Oral Reading passage, Level 8

"It was on a dreary night of November that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might now infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet..."

100 wpm; 200 wpm; 250 wpm; 300 wpm



Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN)

o a s d p a o s p d
s d a p d o a p s o
a o s a s d p o d a
d s p o d s a s o p
s a d p a p o a p s

=/ < 18.9 seconds not a processing problem; 21.3 borderline disabled; 26.3 disabled

Felton, R.H., Naylor, Cecile E., & Wood, F. B. 1990. Neuropsychological profile of adult dyslexics. *Brain and Language*, 39, 485-497.



Fluency Assessment (continued)

3. Reading Prosody

- Does the reader chunk words into phrases bringing a rhythm to the text and some evidence of comprehension?



Prosody Scale

Adapted from the NAEP Oral Reading Study, 2002

- 3** Smooth reading, with pauses occurring at appropriate points and few (if any) repetitions
- 2** Fairly steady reading, but with pauses occurring sometimes within phrases and/or some repetitions
- 1** Uneven/choppy reading, with frequent repetitions and/or lapses in phrasing and/or sounding out of words
- 0** Labored, word-by-word reading, with continual repetitions, frequent stopping, and/or sounding out of words



What if assessment reveals fluency problems?

What can you do?

First, consider the nature of the problem.

-- Which aspect(s) of fluency will you need to address?



What is Fluency?

Aspects of Fluent Reading

- Speed
- Accuracy in word identification
- Phrasing and expression (prosody)



Fluency

■ **Why is it important?**

Fluency is required for comprehension. Accurate and efficient word identification allows the reader to pay attention to meaning.

Fluent reading is comprehensible because it sounds like speech.

■ **Who needs it?**

Most adult beginning readers & many others



What is Fluency?

Research-Based Recommendation:

Use ***guided repeated oral reading*** techniques to build reading fluency.



Guided Repeated Oral Reading

A sampling of approaches:

- Reading to the teacher or tutor
- Echo reading
- Dyad or choral reading
- Performance reading
- Cross-generational reading



Another Approach:

If word identification is part of the fluency problem, phonics instruction and sight-word practice may make a difference.



Other Issues in Fluency Development

- **Appropriate difficulty level of materials**
 - For speed & phrasing
(relatively easy text)
 - For accuracy—decoding in context
(more difficult text)



Other Issues in Fluency Development

- **Managing guided repeated oral reading in the classroom**
 - Tapes or CDs for independent practice
(if recordings of appropriate level texts can be acquired or created)



Free Fluency Resource

- **“Reading for Today’s Adults”** – on the website of the Marshall, MN adult education program

<http://www.marshalladulthoodeducation.org>



Free Fluency Resource

Reading Skills for Today's Adults

- Passages from 1-8 G.E.
- Learner listens to them being read
 - Reads and times self
 - Listens again and re-reads

(Also includes--Vocabulary, questions, writing prompts)



Vocabulary Assessment Research

- Adult literacy students' vocabulary growth may be dependent on their reading ability.
- Their life experience may give them an advantage at lower reading levels but this advantage disappears at higher reading levels.



Vocabulary Instruction Research

No emerging principles

- Important trends for ABE:
 - Vocabulary can be improved in general functional literacy settings, although teaching vocabulary in a specific setting, such as a family literacy or workplace setting, may be more effective
 - Compatible with limited K-12 research: Engaging contexts may be more effective



Vocabulary Instruction Research

- Teach vocabulary in multiple, engaging contexts that foster repeated exposure to new concepts (such as family or workplace settings)
- Other ideas from K-12 research
 - Teach students how to find definitions and other information about words
 - Encourage extensive reading and exposure to new words



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Edgar Dale's Degrees of Knowing Word Meanings¹

1. I never saw or heard the word before.
2. I know there is such a word but I don't know what it means.
3. I've heard it and seen it. I know what it has to do with but I can't tell you what it means specifically.
4. I know what it means, I'll recognize it whenever I see it or hear it, I can use it.

¹Dale, E. (1976.) *The living word vocabulary*. Elgin, IL: Dome Press.



Two Primary “Word Banks”

Receptive (listening) vocabulary

words we know well enough to understand when seen or heard in context *Dale’s Stages 2 - 4*

Productive vocabulary

words we know well enough to use in writing or speaking *Dale’s stage 4*



Two Primary “Word Banks”

Receptive Vocabulary
Listening, Reading

Productive Vocabulary
Speaking, Writing



Types of Vocabulary Assessments

1. Elicited word meanings oral (productive vocabulary)
 - Diagnostic Assessments of Reading (DAR)
 - Davidson & Bruce Word Meaning Test **
2. Multiple choice (oral/written) (limited receptive vocabulary)
 - Adult Basic Learning Examination, Levels 2, 3 (ABLE)
 - Test of Adult Basic Education, Form 5/6 (TABE)

****Free to download on the ARCS website**



Types of Vocabulary Assessments (cont'd)

3. Multiple choice (oral – pictures) two tests of Receptive Vocabulary
 - Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III) (PPVT-III)
 - Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III
4. Embedded in comprehension passages (limited receptive vocabulary)
 - Test of adult Basic education , Form 7/8 (TABE)
 - Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)



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Davidson & Bruce Word Meaning Test ASRP website

Level 6

surrender _____

occupation _____

decline _____

consume _____

dismal _____

Number Correct _____ 4 or 5 correct? Go to next level.
3 or fewer correct? Stop or go back to previous level

http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/PF_WMT_Test.htm



Davidson & Bruce Word Meaning Test ASRP website

Level 6:

surrender

Main concept: to give up

Sample sentence: "The man surrendered after holding everyone hostage."

occupation

Main concepts: job; something you do for a living



Davidson & Bruce Word Meaning Test ASRP website

Level 6 (continued):

decline

Main concepts: become less; go lower; refuse; reject; to turn something down; say no to something

consume

Main concepts: eat or drink up; digest; use it up

dismal

Main concepts: gloomy; dark; grayish



Vocabulary

■ **Why is it important?**

For beginners, oral vocabulary (knowledge of word meanings) is the basis for meaningful reading.

Readers can't understand a writer's message unless they understand most of the words, so they must learn new word meanings to become better readers.

■ **Who needs it most?**

Non-native speakers (ESOL students)

Many intermediate & higher-level readers



Vocabulary Development

Research-Based Tips

- Pre-teach unfamiliar words in instructional text.
- Ensure multiple exposures to words by teaching useful words learners will encounter in subject-matter texts they are studying or other adult materials.



Vocabulary Development

- Engage learners in using and working with the words in several ways.
- Teach word-learning strategies like structural analysis, using context clues, and using a dictionary.
- Encourage wide reading of level-appropriate materials in varied subject-matter areas.



Identifying Words to Teach

Vocabulary tests are not like diagnostic assessments of phonics skills. They don't tell you exactly what to teach.

So, if there's a need, what do you do?



Identifying Words to Teach

One way to think about it:

Consider how useful they are—how frequently a reader will encounter them.

Three “tiers” of words have been identified by Isabel Beck (2002).

Beck, I., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.



Three tiers of words

Tier One: The most basic words that rarely require instruction (*car, sad, man*)

Tier Two: High-frequency words for mature language users (*coincidence, insistent, reluctant*)

Tier Three: Low-frequency words, often limited to specific domains (*isotope, entomologist, lathe*)



Identifying Words to Teach

- **Signal words/phrases** – therefore, finally, however, in contrast, in conclusion
- **Subject-matter words/phrases**
 - Science** – atmosphere, bacteria, environment, heredity, hypothesis, resource
 - Social studies** – amendment, budget, chronological order, consent, boycott, civil rights movement, pioneer



Identifying Words to Teach

- **Words that should be pre-taught:**
 - Important for understanding of text
 - Not definable using context clues



Word-Learning Strategies to Teach

- **Structural analysis** (morphemic analysis):
 - Prefixes (anti, dis, semi, pre, post)
 - Suffixes (ful, less, ment, ly, tion)
 - Roots (aero, bio, graph, therm, psych)
- **Dictionary use**
- **Context clues**



Types of Context Clues

- **Restatement:** The team could be described as *robust*, very strong and sturdy.
- **Synonyms:** The little girl missed her nap, so she was really *cantankerous*. She was grumpy and difficult all afternoon.
- **Antonyms & Contrasts:** I'm usually gregarious, but after I lost my job, I kept to myself for several weeks.
- **Definition:** An advocate is a person who not only believes strongly about a cause, but also speaks up in support of it.



Background Knowledge

- It's more than vocabulary. What about the bigger concepts and bodies of knowledge to which words relate and refer?
- Limited knowledge of the subject matter of a text makes it hard to make inferences and use context clues.



Conclusion

- Research provides some very practical and useful approaches to teaching adults to read
- To illustrate this, we looked at alphabetics and comprehension during our last webcast and at fluency and vocabulary today
- Reading components provide a framework for assessment and instruction



Conclusion

- Assess all components to understand strengths and weaknesses
- Address all components during instruction:
- Use assessment results to
 - decide which components to focus on
 - design plan for instruction, using research-based approaches to instruction
 - select reading material at an appropriate level
- Continue to assess in order to adjust plan for instruction as learner's reading grows and changes



Resources

- Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Website
-- www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles
- Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults -
- <http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/publications.html>
- Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction --
<http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/publications.html>



Questions and Answer Session

Please use the text box to submit questions to presenters.

Thank you for joining us.

For more information on the National Institute for Literacy,
please visit: <http://www.nifl.gov>.